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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
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Agenda item 13

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AS AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ABOVE ALL THE RIGHT TO LIFE

Written statement submitted by the observer delegation of New Zealand on 14 August 1995

The observer delegation of New Zealand wishes to draw the attention of the Sub-Commission to the attached resolution adopted unanimously in the New Zealand Parliament on 20 July which deplored the French decision to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific, including on the basis that the design, production, testing, possession, deployment and possible use of nuclear weapons constitute threats to the right to life, and to a clean environment for current and future generations, and for all species.

It would be appreciated if this resolution of the New Zealand Parliament could be circulated as an official document of the Sub-Commission.

GE.95-13582 (E)

Resolution adopted by the New Zealand Parliament, on 20 July 1995

I move that this House:

Deploring the recent announcement by President Chirac that France intends to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific, thereby breaking the moratorium observed since 1992;

Recognizing New Zealand's responsibility as a non-nuclear-weapon State under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and as a Member of the United Nations;

Recalling New Zealand's status as a nuclear-free zone established by law in 1987, and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone established by the Treaty of Rarotonga in 1985;

Recalling that France, China, and the other nuclear-weapon States undertook during the NPT Review and Extension Conference to exercise utmost restraint on nuclear testing, and to sign a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) no later than 1996, and their obligation under the NPT to negotiate nuclear disarmament in good faith;

Recalling that it is 50 years since the first nuclear weapons were used in war at Hiroshima and Nagasaki;

Believing that the designing, production, testing, possession, deployment and possible use of nuclear weapons constitute threats to the right to life, and to a clean environment for current and future generations and for all species;

Recalling the judgement of the International Court of Justice in 1974 with regard to nuclear testing;

Recalling also the sabotage and sinking of the "Rainbow Warrior", and the killing of Fernando Pereira by French Government agents 10 years ago in order to prevent that vessel making a voyage of protest and witness to the French nuclear-testing zone;

Noting that France's decision to resume nuclear testing, and the continuation of testing by China, may jeopardize the negotiations now under way on the conclusion of a truly comprehensive and internationally-verifiable nuclear-test-ban treaty;

Noting also that France's decision runs counter to strongly-held views in South Pacific countries and has aroused a storm of protest around the world;

Noting regional concern that the planned resumption of testing will put at risk the marine environment, resources, way of life and health of the peoples of the South Pacific;

Resolves to send a delegation of New Zealand parliamentarians to discuss this issue with members of the European Parliament;

Calls on France and China to cancel their planned nuclear-testing programmes, and for the closure for all time of all nuclear-testing facilities;

Urges France and the other four nuclear-weapon States to agree to a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty which specifically prohibits all nuclear tests and experiments, including low and very low yield tests;

Calls on the nuclear-weapon States to sign without delay a CTBT as the next step on the road towards complete nuclear disarmament, a CTBT being seen as an essential commitment by the nuclear-weapon States towards preventing nuclear proliferation;

Calls on France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America to sign the protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga (South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty) immediately, as a measure of good faith;

Calls on all countries in the southern hemisphere to conclude at an early date nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties currently under negotiation;

Resolves to continue to raise the issue by all available legal and political means in all relevant international forums, particularly those of the United Nations;

Invites France and China to recognize the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice without reservation, in respect of any matters concerning nuclear weapons;

Urges all other parliaments to redouble their efforts to reach an early agreement on a truly comprehensive test-ban treaty and move towards complete nuclear disarmament.